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ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION AT THE FORMER ATHENS TANK FARM (UJIMA VILLAGE AND EARVIN MAGIC JOHNSON REGIONAL PARK) WILLOWBROOK, CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTION

This fact sheet has been prepared to update residents of the Willowbrook community and other interested parties on the ongoing environmental investigation at the former Athens Tank Farm. Through 2011, the investigation focused on Earvin Magic Johnson Regional Park and Ujima Village, but, as described below the scope of the investigation is expanding to neighborhoods east and south of the site.

The environmental investigation and cleanup are ongoing. The investigation has focused on an evaluation of petroleum chemicals most likely to impact human health, including petroleum-related chemicals, or "*hydrocarbons*," in relatively shallow soil and soil vapor. Below is a concise summary of findings within the soil, air, and groundwater.

Soil

Investigation results show elevated levels of petroleum hydrocarbons detected at locations across the site, primarily at 10 feet below the ground surface and deeper. Due to the 10-foot depth, current visitors to the park and workers are unlikely to come into contact with these soils.

Air

Chemicals detected in indoor air within onsite buildings were no different than those found in outdoor air both at the site and regionally within the South Coast Air Basin. Therefore, indoor air quality is the same as background, or "*ambient*" air quality.

Groundwater

Petroleum hydrocarbons detected in groundwater beneath the site are located at an average depth of 37 feet beneath the surface of the ground. Due to its depth, the public is unlikely to come into contact with the groundwater since it is not used for irrigation or drinking water.

HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT

A health risk assessment is a predictive, scientific tool to evaluate environmental investigation data and determine potential **current or future** threats to human health. A health risk assessment **does not estimate past exposures** and does not assess an individual's health condition. Although there are no residents currently residing at the Ujima Village apartments, a health risk assessment was performed to estimate potential health risks for a person assumed to be living there. The health risk assessment also evaluated potential risks for recreational users and employees at the Earvin Magic Johnson Regional Park. The environmental investigation included environmental data, both in the Ujima Village apartments and the park, and **concluded that site conditions are safe within the boundary of Ujima Village and the park facilities.**

An offsite investigation is underway to assess potential risks to the residents in the surrounding areas. This assessment will be performed using soil gas and indoor air testing results, which requires permission from property owners and/or tenants to access their property. Once the indoor air testing is completed, a health risk assessment will be performed to estimate current and future potential health risks



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for the surrounding communities, and to determine necessary actions to protect residents, and clean up the site.

CONCERNS ABOUT HEALTH RISK FROM POTENTIAL PAST EXPOSURES

Concerns have been raised about whether prior conditions at the site may have caused illnesses in former residents of Ujima Village and members of the surrounding community. While site data can be utilized today to estimate current and future health risks, current science does not allow a determination as to whether prior site conditions may have caused illness.

Former residents of Ujima Village and current residents in nearby communities who are concerned about their health are encouraged to seek the advice of their physicians. For residents with limited access to healthcare, the LA County Department of Health Services is engaged in efforts to assist the community in gaining access to healthcare. Residents should contact 211 for more information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Regional Water Board Contacts

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Attachments



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Attachment 1

BACKGROUND

General Petroleum, now ExxonMobil, operated an oil storage facility from the mid-1920s to the mid-1960s at the site. Petroleum wastes that were leaked or spilled at the site were not cleaned up to today's standards when the tank farm was dismantled in the 1960s and 1970s and prior to the construction of the regional park and public housing.

The purpose of the present environmental investigation is to:

1. Define the type and extent of contaminants in the soil and groundwater at the site
2. Evaluate the potential risk that these substance may pose to human health and the environment
3. Design and implement a safe and effective cleanup

This is accomplished through an evaluation of soil, soil vapor, air, and groundwater at the site and in the surrounding area, for presence of petroleum products and other contaminants. The chemicals of primary concern are petroleum products including hexane, benzene, ethyl-benzene, toluene and xylene. Key agencies engaged with the project include:

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) - the lead agency overseeing this project which has ordered ExxonMobil to investigate and clean up the former Athens Tank Farm. The Regional Board is responsible for reviewing, approving, and monitoring the investigation and clean-up of the site.

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) – an agency providing technical support with particular emphasis on the assessment of the potential health risk associated with the contamination.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health – the agency serving as the local contact and resource for information on community health and well-being.

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